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JOURNALISM

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The relation that Journalism bears to the other professions has entirely changed in recent years. Journalism has become a very potential, if not a chief, factor in the world's affairs. The advance of civilization may be measured by the dissemination of learning; it received its chief impulse from the art of printing — hence it may be affirmed truthfully that civilization entered upon its latest phase only when printing had attained its latest development, an important manifestation of which is the growth of Journalism. The press within a half century has become the chief medium of enlightenment; it has awakened the masses to full perception of their powers, and has established the fact that an alert and aroused public opinion is irresistible, the mightiest force evolved by modern civilization.

The role of Journalism in the drama of the world's development has entirely changed the character of the profession, transforming it into a complex vocation, which opens avenues for careers of diversified character. When we speak of a Journalist's training to-day it might mean the preparation for any one of the dozen or more branches of the profession, each one of which offers a rich harvest of brilliant trophies to the ambitious, capable student. It shall be the purpose of this paper to refer to these; also to explain briefly the duties they impose, whereby one can deduce the training and education that are essential.

Present Era of Growth

Journalism entered upon its present era of growth about a half century ago. Newspapers, prior to the discovery of the telegraph and the railroad, were insignificant and unimportant. Journalism in the early half of the nineteenth century saw its best expression in the weeklies and monthlies, which circulated to a very limited ex-

tent and were confined chiefly to polemics and political debates. It was not until the early thirties that the daily newspapers began to print any semblance of news. Even **then**, and for nearly twenty years thereafter, news constituted **their** least important feature. Sixty or seventy years ago the newspaper printing press was a crude, cumbersome, awkward implement operated by hand, scarcely capable of producing one thousand impressions a day, while white paper was selling at 30 and 40 cents per pound, manufactured by antiquated processes from rags. Type was set by hand; in fact, typesetting had made little progress from the days of Caxton to the dawn of the twentieth century, when the wonderful Mergenthaler linotype or typesetting machine was invented. Compare the Washington Press, which was in vogue sixty years ago, having a capacity of 1,000 little quarto sheets per day, to the octuple printing machine with a capacity of 40,000 sixteen-page papers per hour, pasted, folded and counted, and some conception is conveyed of the progress made within the memory of men yet in active life.

Reduction in the cost of paper has been an important factor; instead of costing 25 to 35 cents per pound, as was the case seventy years ago, it is now manufactured from spruce wood and delivered on spindles in the press room at a cost averaging 2 cents per pound. Sixty-four pages of the average newspaper size weigh a pound; the average metropolitan newspaper contains 16 pages — hence, in each copy there is one-fourth of a pound of white news print paper, costing one-half cent. The one-cent newspaper is sold to wholesale dealers at about 50 cents per hundred, practically the actual cost of the raw paper which it contains — hence, it is readily understood that the profits from newspapers of this class are not derived from circulation receipts. On the contrary, the total circulation income of the one-cent newspaper very rarely equals the cost of the white paper, plus the transportation charges.

The advent of the one-cent newspaper, however, produced a revolution in Journalism. An enormous distribution resulted and a complete transformation in mechanical appliances followed; chief of these were (1) the development of the rotary press to its present state of high efficiency, (2) the improvements in stereotyping, with the attendant multiplication of plates by quick processes, (3) the typesetting machine — three notable mechanical triumphs of the last quarter century. The enlarged clientele stimulated activity, devel-

oped enterprise, brought the newspaper to all classes; it gave the press the impulse by which it leaped to its present position of commanding importance and prodigious influence. It was raised to a plane where now it may stimulate the ambition of the most aspiring, opening avenues for achievement, which are excelled by no other profession.

Newspaper Statistics

There are about 25,000 newspapers published in the United States, of which about 2,500 are issued daily. The amount of capital invested is enormous, the expenses of a metropolitan daily more often exceeding than falling below \$1,000,000 per year. The expenses of several daily American newspapers exceed \$10,000 per day, \$4,000,000 per year; two or three exceed \$6,000,000 per year. According to the United States census for 1900, 107,000 persons are employed on the American newspapers and about 1,000,000 are supported directly and indirectly by the newspaper industry; the receipts of the newspaper publishers are given at \$175,000,000 for the year 1900, \$95,000,000 of which came from advertising and \$80,000,000 from subscriptions. The total number of copies of newspapers and other periodicals issued each year in this country exceeds 8,000,000,000 or over 100 copies for each man, woman and child. At the beginning of 1800 there was one newspaper for every 26,450 inhabitants; to-day there is one for every 3,500. These statistics convey some idea of the amazing extent to which newspaper making has grown in this country.

Before discussing the proper education for a journalist, it is necessary to dwell to some extent upon the organization of a newspaper as at present constituted and to enlarge upon the methods by which it is produced. As the ramifications of the twentieth century newspaper are better understood, the variety and versatility of talent required in its production will be more easily comprehended and can be more intelligently analyzed.

The organization of the newspaper consists of various departments, each one of which offers possibilities as a vocation. These may for convenience be divided as follows — Business Departments, consisting of the usual auditing branches; the Circulation, Advertising, Mechanical, News, and Editorial.

The Business Management

The large investments and enormous operations of a metropolitan newspaper make its business management of prime importance. It is organized as a banking institution with cashiers, auditors, bookkeepers, clerks, collectors, besides an elaborate organization of checking clerks, whereby intricate records are kept of every line of advertising that appears each day, together with comparative tables of all the lines of advertising in classification in all the other newspapers, both morning and afternoon, that are regarded as competitors. Careful records are kept of all news print paper received; it is reweighed and a close account is made of the consumption, the production per pound, the waste and the tare. Records are kept of the ink, its quality; the oil, waste, fuel, the renewal of machinery, betterments, repairs and all the infinitesimal details which enter into the operation of a large plant. The publication of a newspaper, with its stupendous presses, electrical and steam plant, stereotyping outfit, linotype batteries and zinc etching paraphernalia, requires complex and intricate machinery, demanding the highest mechanical skill and the most delicate and painstaking care.

Mechanical

The investment of capital in a newspaper enterprise is enormous. A large newspaper requires from 30 to 50 linotype machines, each costing from \$3,000 to \$3,500; one American newspaper has installed as many as 70 machines. Each machine does the work of six typesetters. Each machine composes in a period of eight hours from 40,000 to 50,000 ems of type. Men of the highest skill are required for the presses, each of which represents an outlay of from \$25,000 to \$50,000. The pressman must not only have a machinist's experience and skill, but in addition must possess expert knowledge of the delicate operations of the complicated perfecting web press. The linotype machine is almost human in the assembling of matrices into lines in response to the operator's touch on a keyboard similar to a typewriter, casting at the same time a line of the assembled matrices into a line or slug of type, and by the same motion redistributing into its proper channel each separate matrix. This, as may well be conceived, requires an intricate machine, the care of which offers a career in mechanics.

Stereotyping

It should be remembered that a newspaper is not printed from the type. The type, after it is arranged in a form to represent one page of the newspaper, is reproduced on a sheet of papier-mache. This is dried, and from this mould is cast a convex plate on which is reproduced the facsimile of the type surface; this plate is fitted upon the cylinders of the press and from its surface the printing is executed. The conversion of the dried paper into the convex plates is called stereotyping. This is now done by machinery of a very complicated nature, whereby the time consumed in producing a plate is only one-tenth of what was formerly required. Here again there is need for skill and dexterity, as well as a knowledge of machinery and mechanics. Zinc etching is carried on to a large extent in some offices, where there are profuse illustrations, and in all to some extent. By this process a subject is photographed on a zinc plate which is covered with a chemically prepared surface; this is then immersed in a bath of acid, which eats out the metal where it is exposed, thus reproducing the lines of the photograph. The machinery for perfecting the plates to produce the marvellous results seen in the illustrated papers requires the highest skill as well as careful training and delicate taste.

The steam and electrical plants, added to the special mechanical departments enumerated above, all of which are essential parts of the modern newspaper, comprise an elaborate and extensive equipment where scores of operatives of highest skill are employed, who have many opportunities of winning fame and fortune for superior workmanship or mechanical achievement.

Circulation

The Circulation Department is an important organization, requiring, as it does, supervision of the city distribution, and mail subscriptions; dealings with the wholesale agents and care of the multiplicity of country agents, whose number will reach into the thousands. In most of the large cities the local distribution is entrusted to wholesale agents, but at Philadelphia the old-fashioned carrier system has endured. There are there about 275 carriers, who have apportioned the city into districts or routes. Each carrier owns his own route, provides his own distributors and collects from

each individual subscriber. These routes constitute a considerable asset, having recently sold as high as \$4,000 each. They are traded in, bought and sold, bequeathed and acquired like any other tangible asset. The practice of canvassing for subscribers with premium offers has become very extensive. Some newspapers offer all varieties of merchandise as premiums, and hundreds of thousands of dollars are invested in this way. All newspapers do not engage in premium canvassing and by some it is sternly discountenanced as unethical, but very large circulations as a rule, with few notable exceptions, have been quickly acquired through this method. One newspaper added in one year 75,000 circulation by giving to new subscribers for 50 cents, payable in instalments of six cents per week, a Bible which cost \$1.75. The *London Times* is reported to have realized a profit of over \$750,000 by the sale of an encyclopædia in connection with the newspaper. The work in the Circulation Department, where premiums are offered, gives numerous opportunities for original thought and creative talent, and to be successful requires a knowledge of human nature and keen business instinct.

Advertising

The Advertising Department in itself is a profession and offers attractive careers, which can be better understood when it is remembered that the total amount expended in this country in 1900 for advertising equalled one-eighth of our total foreign imports, including grain, cotton, machinery, and exceeded half our total exports in 1862.

In recent years the recognition of advertising as a separate vocation or a specialized profession has resulted in the organization of schools for advertising in every large city in the country. Newspapers devoted to advertising have sprung up by the score; advertising agents have multiplied with the most amazing fecundity, and a literature has been produced devoted to this one especial branch. Some of the American colleges have chairs of advertising, and nearly every commercial school and college in the country has important branches devoted to the subject. Every newspaper has associated with it men who are skilled in this art. Here again that touchstone requisite in every branch of journalism — the knowledge of human nature, — is the secret of success.

Art advertising is the æsthetic phase which involves the deli-

cate transformation of a subject into artistic expression; the talents which inspire the painter and guide the sculptor, are here employed, but there must be something besides: that indescribable, occult faculty of arresting the eye of the reader through some happy phrase, some skilful arrangement of display, or some lucid explanation of facts; something that will convey with instantaneous definiteness and conviction the idea that is sought to be expressed. Herein lies the art, the science and the expertness, which can be partly acquired by practice and precept, but its highest manifestation comes mainly by natural instinct.

Editorial Departments

The Editorial departments may be divided into three branches — the Editorial, the News and the Local. The three, though distinct in their respective duties, are so closely allied in their common purpose and in their achievement that the equipment which yields the best results in one is a *sine qua non* in the two others. An editor who fails to understand the value of news, who lacks the faculty of distinguishing between what is suitable for publication from the standpoint of popular interest, is sadly deficient in the elemental requirements of his profession, while the News Editor or the Local Reporter who cannot discriminate between the nicely balanced points of a news story, extracting its real meaning, interpreting the real relation it bears to events that have preceded or its influence upon what may follow — in other words, who has not the knowledge, the comprehension and the breadth of intellect to deduce the real import of a current event, which, in the last analysis, is the chief editorial faculty — is in the wrong place and will be very speedily displaced.

Let us first consider how a newspaper is produced and we will then be better prepared to discuss the relations which the various editorial departments bear to one another.

The publisher represents the proprietorship and has the supervision of all the various departments which have been referred to above. The heads of each confer with him at various intervals during the day; it devolves upon him to secure men of capacity and to supervise the efficiency of each. The responsibility for the tone of the publication, its general character and the direction of its business activities rest upon him; its general policy on public questions is

in his control, but seldom expressed without the advice and concurrence of the editorial council.

The Council consists of the Publisher, the Editor-in-Chief, the Managing Editor, the City Editor, the chief Editorial writers and often includes the Telegraph Editor, the State Editor, the Night Editor and the Night City Editor, the two latter functionaries being confined to morning newspapers only — though the latter four usually meet at a later council along with the Managing Editor and the City Editor.

The Editor-in-Chief, or the Editor, as he is usually designated, is the writer of the leading editorials; he largely influences the policy of the paper, though on chief issues this is decided after consultation at the council table. Next to him comes the Managing Editor, who is responsible for the assembling and presentation of the news, and has general direction of the operation of the Telegraph and Local Departments; he often also contributes editorials, yet his chief function is the direction and general supervision of the news. The editorial writers each contribute one or more editorials, aggregating in all 1,000 or 1,500 words each day, but they have besides various duties apportioned to them outside of editorial writing, such as supervision of certain exchanges, direction of book reviewers, editing correspondence, etc. Each editorial writer is supposed to have a special aptitude or training in certain branches; one usually treats economic questions, another foreign politics, a third sociology, a fourth industrial subjects, a fifth scientific questions, and so on, but each editor must have diversified attainments to be able to properly discuss any subject that may be assigned to him in an emergency.

The exchange editor is an important functionary; his duty is to carefully scan all the exchanges — every newspaper receives several hundred daily — to collate from their columns matters deemed worthy of reproduction or that suggest subjects which may be treated from a local standpoint. He must be alert, keen, and able instantly to perceive the applicability of what is printed in other newspapers to the clientele he serves.

The Associated Press

The organization and development of the great news gathering institution known as the Associated Press revolutionized the news-

paper profession. Before its creation, each newspaper in gathering news was compelled to depend upon its own resources and ingenuity to establish bureaus and correspondence agencies at all important points, and to keep a watchful eye over all the civilized globe. The expense of attempting to obtain and transmit even the chief events at the capitals of the world was beyond the resources of any one institution; hence until some plan of co-operation and division of expenses was devised, the newspapers could afford comparatively little telegraphic news. At length plans looking to this end were inaugurated by the leading newspapers and after several years of experimentation and more or less expensive competitive efforts, the American newspapers united in the formation of the greatest news-gathering association the world has yet known, called the Associated Press. This association is organized on the co-operative plan, each subscriber being a shareholder and a mutual owner of the news; no dividends are declared; all the receipts are expended in the gathering and transmission of news. Each newspaper is assessed a fixed tax each week, the amount being based upon the individual newspaper's relative importance. In the large cities this tax ranges from \$125 to \$200 per week. The local agent of the Association has access to all the local and neighborhood news gathered by each separate newspaper of its membership; hence the Associated Press has at its command the united effort of some seven hundred daily papers whose expenditures in the collection of local news will aggregate millions of dollars each week. It has moreover its own correspondents at every important point in the world, besides having alliances for the interchange of news with all the news associations upon the habitable globe, the whole producing the most complete, exhaustive and comprehensive news gathering system ever conceived by man. Its own operations involve an expenditure of over two millions per year. Reports of all events deemed worthy of transmission are assembled at different central points, where the news is collated and edited and in turn transmitted to the various subscribers.

A metropolitan paper receives from this one source alone within twenty-four hours at least 50,000 words by wire; it represents the united effort of the local staffs of at least seven hundred newspapers, together with the labors of an innumerable number of spe-

cial correspondents, involving an outlay which no one establishment could conceivably assume.

The News Service

In addition to this news service, the large papers have their own special correspondents at the national capital, also at the more important cities, besides special men at foreign centers, who supplement the news of the Associated Press and also take up international questions from a semi-editorial point of view.

Furthermore, every newspaper has correspondents at all points in its tributary territory, who transmit occurrences by mail and wire. Even this is supplemented by special staff men who are sent out from the main office to cover elaborately events that are deemed sufficiently important.

This mass of telegraphic matter is transmitted over the regular telegraphic wires at special press rates ranging from one cent to one-third of a cent per word for domestic messages and from 10 cents to \$3.00 per word for cables. The larger newspapers have in addition their own leased wires from Washington and other points, which are at their exclusive command.

Only a small proportion of this stupendous mass of telegraphic matter finds its way into the columns of the newspapers. The total received might aggregate 100,000 words per night, representing at least 70 columns; the average amount used is perhaps one-fourth of this, rarely so much.

The telegraphic matter is edited at the General News Desk and the State Desk, in charge respectively of the Telegraph and State Editors; all news relating to sports is handled by the Sporting Editor, and all financial news, quotations, etc., by the editors especially assigned to those departments. The Telegraph Editor must reach quick judgment and make instantaneous decisions. As the pages of telegraphic news reach him he must immediately absorb their import and fix their value. He then passes the matter to a sub-editor with instructions either to edit, condense or rewrite; many dispatches are entirely rewritten; very few can be inserted at the full length at which they are received. As the news of the Associated Press is gathered and transmitted for use in all parts of the United States, the relative local values cannot usually be observed. For instance, a railroad disaster or a fire is in truth a railroad disaster

or a fire, whether it occurs in California or in Pennsylvania. The Associated Press is compelled to procure all the facts in either case, having in view both its eastern and western constituency; yet it is evident that the newspaper at Philadelphia need not give the occurrences on the Pacific Slope the same space it accords to similar events near at hand. In all cases the Telegraph Editors must discriminate and quickly decide what space should be given each item. Necessarily enormous quantities of telegraph matter must be cancelled or thrown aside; in fact the matter thrown aside considerably exceeds the matter printed.

The Local Department

The most elaborate division of the editorial staff is the Local Department. It is directly in charge of the City Editor, whose chief lieutenants are the Day and the Night City Editor. The special local services dealing with such matters as Legal News, Financial, Art, Dramatic, Religious, Society, Music, Marine, Railroads, Real Estate and Sporting are each in charge of editors who have both by education and training, equipment for those particular branches; these are again subdivided, especially Sporting and Society, which have their own staff of reporters, the number depending upon the policy of the paper in treating those branches.

A newspaper for example, which devotes close attention to Legal Intelligence, employs three editors who give their entire time to court proceedings and legal news; the value of Society news is estimated differently among newspapers; by some, one reporter only is employed, by others there is an Editor in charge, with six or eight reporters under him, sometimes at large functions, ten or twelve. The Financial Editor on serious newspapers usually has sub-editors; the Sporting Department has men with special training in various sports; the Art, Music and Dramatic Departments are in charge of editors, who of course must have expert knowledge and critical judgment.

In addition to these regular Local Department divisions, reporters are assigned to the various districts of the city. Philadelphia, for instance, is divided into seven districts; one reporter devotes his entire time to each particular district, visiting the police stations, hospitals, and other possible news sources in his territory. In New York and some other cities, the newspapers have a local

Associated Press which covers the routine local occurrences, supplying each of the subscribing newspapers with such matters as court news, accidents, fires, real estate, marine, etc.

Besides these special assignments, the Local Editor has a general staff, which is assigned to all current events. Regular men cover local politics, the central police station, municipal buildings, schools, trade bodies, the learned societies, large meetings and the multitude of other activities which make up the life of a great city.

In addition, there are editors who are assigned to develop special stories and other general utility men and "free lances" who are on the alert for any event, incident or occurrence which might prove of interest to the public.

The City Editor keeps an Assignment Book where he enters detailed records of all "futures." With the aid of the Day City Editor he plans out the day's work. He is a general who must deploy his troops with the sagacity and judgment of a skilled tactician; he must have the entire city well in hand and well in mind, covering every possible avenue of news and providing in every conceivable manner against a contemporary's "beat."

The Night Editor

The result of all the planning and manœuvring of the City Editor at length reaches the Night City Editor. It is the day men who sow, the night men who reap, and not infrequently when the night city editor discovers that he is allotted fifteen columns of space and sees piled on his desk and in process of incubation perhaps forty-five columns, he may well exclaim with the prophet, "They who sow the wind reap the whirlwind."

All the local matter when prepared by the reporters is passed to editors known as copy readers. They carefully go over each line, erase, elaborate, change phraseology, rewrite, condense, amplify and sometimes reject; they also write the headlines and give the articles a final finish for the typesetter.

All the manuscript goes from the editors to the night editor and is sent by him to the composing room, where it is distributed to the typesetters; as fast as a column is finished, or in the vernacular, "set"—proofs of it are taken ("pulled" in the vernacular) and copies go to the proofreaders, managing editor, the various

editors, also to the autocrat of the morning newspaper, the night editor.

It is with the Night Editor that the final arbitrament rests. It is he who ascertains what space the advertisements will require, the number of columns to be allotted local, telegraphic and other news, considering in this calculation the space for the various fixed departments. He consults freely with the managing editor and is under his direction. Their joint decision fixes the number of pages. This depends upon the amount of advertising and the quantity of important news that "must go."

The night editor examines all proofs with hawk-like scrutiny; he knows all the news in hand and in sight. As the time approaches when the pages must be assembled for the various editions, he takes his stand in the composing room, directs where the various articles are to be placed and how the pages are to be arranged. Experience enables him to read the type with the same facility that one scans a printed proof; with the skill, judgment and rapid decision which only an alert mind and quick intelligence can provide he chooses from all the type that is at hand, glancing over many columns, selecting, altering, reducing, cancelling, transferring, and placing each item in proper grouping; locating the matter according to its relative importance and keeping always in mind the proper sequence and relationship of the hundreds of separate subjects that the day's news develops.

The Publisher's Qualification

The question is now pertinent what is the proper qualification and equipment for a journalist? Is a college education necessary? Mr. Pulitzer, one of the successful American journalists, answers it in the affirmative. He proves his faith by inducing Columbia College to accept an endowment from him of \$2,000,000 to establish a Chair of Journalism, and maintains that before the century closes, Schools of Journalism will be accepted as a feature of specialized higher education like schools of law or of medicine.

Charles A. Dana, another eminent journalist, maintained, on the other hand, that while college education is of high value, business training, "understanding the rules of business and the means and methods of business are quite as necessary." Mr. Pulitzer, however, believes that Journalism and business are wide apart and

asserts, "If my wishes are to be considered, business instruction of any sort should not, would not and must not form any part of the work of the College of Journalism." He maintains that few men in the business office of a newspaper know anything about the principles of Journalism, and argues at length that the profession should have no relation whatever to business. But business training is certainly of great advantage; the journalist out of touch with practical affairs lacks an essential qualification.

The publisher must be many sided; he requires editorial ability, news instinct and business acumen, yet these three faculties are seldom developed in one individual; he may not be an encyclopædia of knowledge; he may not have profound learning and liberal education, yet he must have clear vision, broad judgment and quick receptiveness; he must be capable of surveying the occurrences all over the world with healthy, intelligent, practical common sense.

As director of the policy of the newspaper he becomes in fact the editor of the editors; as the controller of its business, he is its highest business authority; as the responsible head for its news qualities, he must keep vigilant supervision of accuracy, completeness and timeliness in this respect. Neither college training nor scholastic research can furnish this diversified equipment.

Its essential element is broad, well-balanced intelligence; a clear perception and high appreciation of the true mission of Journalism; a resolute purpose to conduct the newspaper for no faction, with no fad, free of personal political ambition or sinister material ends; inflexible determination to present the news as it actually occurs — truthfully, accurately, unbiased and uncolored; with rigid resolve to deal fairly by the public. It is quite as important that this sincerity of purpose be fully impressed upon all the staff. The publisher, in fact, embodies the soul of the newspaper; its character, influence and success respond to his personality as man heeds the impelling whisper of conscience.

The Editor

The editors should have a thorough collegiate education. This is of great service everywhere in a newspaper, yet it may be seriously questioned whether a Chair of Journalism will accomplish more than the ordinary academic training. The editor requires a wide horizon, broad comprehension, yet special equipment in a

few fundamentals. The subjects he must treat are infinite in variety, bounded alone by the limits of human activity. His audience gives scant attention to complex technicalities or abstruse theories; it quickly tires of a faddist and wearies of abstractions. Dry philosophy in highly spun, overwrought scholasticism is dead timber in the newspaper; it impairs its usefulness, impedes its progress and if persisted in will produce dry rot. The public expects from its editor vibrant, virile, practical guidance, treatment of public questions by one who knows the subject, interpretation of momentous happenings by analysts who are of the earth, earthy, who plumb the level of average intelligence. The editor needs range of reading with breadth of learning; to carry conviction he must impress his public as much with his good judgment and common sense as with his erudition.

It would be folly to attempt to catalogue the precise academic training the editor requires. There are certain fundamentals which naturally suggest themselves as absolutely necessary to his equipment, chief of which is a thorough grounding in English, ability to express himself in correct style, lucidly, succinctly and cogently. He should know the American Constitution, his State Constitution and the history of his own country thoroughly. The spirit of our institutions should be indoctrinated in him, and he should possess a clear understanding of sociology and political science, political history of all nations, and acquire some conception of researches in science and industry; he should be versed in foreign history, keep in touch with industrial activities and study the political situation in the chief countries of the globe. He must keep abreast of current literature, the best newspapers and the standard magazines, both American and foreign. He should understand something of the mechanical operation of the newspaper and have some little practical knowledge of how it is issued. Prudence, conservatism and accuracy are essential, whether he be a leader writer or engaged at desk work.

College Journalism

I fail to see where a special Chair of Journalism can offer training superior to that derived from the classical course at any first-class college. Specialization is a drawback. The editor's range of subjects is universal. Experience has proved that men of the high-

est specialized education are unfitted for the diversified duties of the editor. Men who have received the highest degrees at famous American and European universities, whose duties, however, have been confined to special research or application have universally proved unfitted for editorial tasks. A certain newspaper recently added to its staff at the same time six or seven men, all graduates of great universities. They had been engaged at a special work which required the ripest scholarship. Their college degrees were formidable; they had delved into the very depths of erudition and acquired honorary degrees and specialized attainments in literature and science, but their learning was characterized by intellectual subtlety, unemotional and purely scholastic; in every instance, without one single exception, they proved wholly unfitted for journalism.

The reader will inquire wherein the journalist differs from the scholar. The difference is radical. The editor must be a scholar, but the scholar may not be an editor. The editor requires in addition to his learning, a keen knowledge of human nature, a quality which is essential to success in every department of journalism. He should be thoroughly human, responsive to the throbbings of the great heart of mankind. He should be practical, free from pedantry, brimming over with common sense; control by any idea or fad is fatal unless it be the influence of instinctive, fundamental rudimentary common sense.

The Telegraph Editors

The editor in the telegraph department has unfolded before him each day a moving panorama of all the world; its sorrows and its joys; its triumphs and its despair; the gruesome chapters of vice, crime, misery, degradation; the sweet wholesomeness of life's beautiful deeds of philanthropy, charity, benevolence; the joyous laughter of happy children, the sweet music of marriage bells, the solemn knells of death, the end of hope, the triumph of achievement, dynastic shocks, polemics, revolution, political upheaval, party controversies, cataclysms of nature, the discoveries of science, revelations in philosophy and history, phases of industry, the rumble, the roll, the tumult, the full diapason of all the active hands, the earnest hearts, the pulsing minds of earth coming from a multiplicity of sources, assembled conglomerately before him for his disposal, instantly to be valued by him, interpreted and properly presented. He requires

a mind capable of close concentration and sustained effort; clear, decisive judgment, calm, dispassionate, discriminating intelligence; he must have some practical knowledge of editing manuscript and ability to extract the germ of a news item without destroying its meaning. He must be in touch with the affairs of mankind and should be well versed in history, geography, international politics and political science, to differentiate the wheat from the chaff, to perceive the possible relation of events, weigh their significance and properly judge their importance.

In the Local Department there is full scope to literary ability, style, original expression and constructive genius. By the system prevailing in most offices, the City Editor assigns special tasks. He usually allots reporters to duties most congenial to them or for which they have strongest preference. There is an indescribable quality in reporting known as "the nose for news" and "the news instinct" which no experience and no education can impart. As well try to create the music of Mozart, the art of Millais or the poetry of Milton as attempt to instill the news instinct in an unadaptable mind. The talent for news getting may be developed just as any other instinctive aptitude, but it cannot be created. Given the gift, it can be developed and strengthened by education and proper training. A reporter must have initiative, enthusiasm, activity, as well as the faculty of knowing what constitutes news; these are also characteristics which are inborn. He may be taught style, restraint and accuracy. The larger newspapers are giving more and more attention to literary tone and expression; often in the supposedly prosaic record of the local happenings will be found a gem of purest literature, a flash of genius, which discloses conspicuous talent and presages a brilliant career. Imagination is one quality which the reporter must suppress; also its twin, exaggeration.

Journalism and Its Tempters

Journalism is beset by many tempters; they pursue editors and reporters with blandishments, sophistry and lures of every kind to promote personal, political or financial ends. The scheming politician, the persuasive, plausible demagogue; the corrupt, base and dishonest scavengers wallowing in wild orgies of public plunder; the smug-faced hypocrites who, in the livery of benign benevolence, feed like vultures upon public rights; the smooth, insinuating pro-

moter who would beguile the public by some lure; the bold, law-defying conspirators who, to gain political advantage or acquire public privileges, will undermine the very corner stone of our liberties and constitutional rights — all must be avoided, sternly resisted and a deaf ear turned to their specious pleas. The editor, if he be a true journalist, consecrates himself to the public! He must meet whatever may arise with serene self-confidence, unfaltering in his fidelity, unwavering in his determination to maintain truth and expose wrong, regardless of the sacrifice, uninfluenced by all considerations, save what conscience and right may dictate. When statesmen falter, when administrators stumble, when popular delusions prevail, the editor is put to the genuine test; if he hesitate in affirming what he knows to be right, if he suppress truth that wrong may come, if he connive at injustice, vacillate, sail with the popular breeze, he basely betrays his profession and is irredeemably false to the ideals of his vocation.

Journalism as at present developed is the teacher of the innumerable hosts of a self-conscious democracy; it is the moulder of public opinion. Without the newspaper, popular judgment would be dumb and formless. Unless this public opinion be kept sane, healthful, uncorrupted, our nation cannot endure. Our democracy, constituting a republic far greater than the imagination of man had conceived, depends upon a free, enlightened, courageous press for its sustenance, its health and its perpetuity. Journalism is the orator that speaks each day with a million tongues to tens of millions of listening ears. In ancient days the sages stood in the market place and poured forth in eloquent phrases, words of wisdom to maintain administrative integrity, pure and undefiled; when this eloquence was hushed, when the listening throngs were taught by demagogues and false prophets; when the seeds of sophistry, selfishness, discontent and dishonesty bore their full fruitage, the fabric of freedom collapsed and from its ruins arose the Empire of the Cæsars. Do not the same evils to-day confront our republic? Do not the demagogic editor, the false teacher, the corrupt politician, the selfish promoter and the hosts of dangerous, self-seeking, unprincipled panderers to popular ignorance and passion — many of whom, alas, are in the profession of journalism, menace our institutions to-day? How much greater the responsibility, how much larger the possibilities, how much nobler the sacrifice, how far more triumphant the victory in

the face of danger such as this! And far above all, how much broader the opportunity and how much more vital the need for editors who "know the right and, knowing, dare maintain!"

The Yellow and the Red Journalism

An insidious evil has in late years crept into the press, an evil inevitable in a country that has experienced a growth such as ours. Our rapid development has created colossal fortunes, prodigious corporations, imperial estates, lavish expenditures, prodigal display, the concentration of power through enormous wealth — all of which can be distorted to magnify the inequalities in conditions of life, and adroitly used to produce discontent and unrest. The demagogic journalist, who is far more dangerous than the demagogic politician, was quick to invade this fruitful field. He realized the proneness of human nature to exaggeration and sensationalism; also that class hatred and popular discontent afforded rich opportunities for journalists of a certain type. They were at first called "yellow," a term which implied sensationalism. They dealt chiefly with the seamy side of human nature, giving unlimited space to tales of hideous crime, flaunting vice in its most abhorrent form in gross exaggeration, crawling like serpents across the thresholds of the home, and laying bare with vulgar display the most sacred confidences of the family circle; holding up to coarse ridicule the precious heritages of sanctified living; profaning the temples of virtue; dealing in salacious scandal and gorging to satiety those who have insensate hunger for pruriency and sensuality.

As might have been expected, this class of newspapers gained wide circulation and exercised a baleful influence on the American Press; soon, however, general disgust with their methods produced a marked reaction and the great mass of American journalists fortunately escaped the contagion which at one time threatened to become widespread.

Realizing at length that sensationalism had about exhausted itself, they were driven to new devices to maintain their circulation and keep general attention centered upon them — in the meantime being joined by certain weekly and monthly publications. They relapsed from "Yellow" into "Red," flaunting the crimson hue of anarchy beside the saffron shade of pruriency. They appeal to ignorance, discontent, malice and malevolence; they array failure

against success; inflame incompetence against capability; they teach that honor and integrity have fled from high places; that our National Congress is a den of thieves; that our Judiciary is contaminated; that our administrators are in corrupt league with scoundrels and traitors; that our entire commercial and financial life is infected and surcharged with degrading dishonesty; that rascality is everywhere rampant, permeating every avenue of trade, every circle of society; that the entire American democracy has become depraved, festered by the virus of universal wickedness and boundless corruption. Fortunately, this phase of "red" journalism — which ought to be dealt with under drastic penal laws — is confined to very few, and the healthful tone of the American press may in the end successfully resist this menacing attack; yet it strongly emphasizes the overwhelming importance of sane journalism and sane, self-respecting, sincere journalists. The harmful influence of this base slander on the American people in the present instance will be checked, but its baneful effect has stimulated the agitator, emboldened the traducer and has inspired the iconoclast with new hope.

Shall democracy, after all, succumb at the hands of these enemies of the Republic, or shall the sober common sense of an enlightened people successfully resist their insidious assaults?

The answer rests with the sane, sober journalists of the future. The press has a grave responsibility; the editor of the future is charged with a solemn mission. If our nation shall be preserved, if our institutions shall be perpetuated, if our constitutional rights shall be safeguarded, if we shall uphold those eternal truths which sustain a healthful, independent, contented, God-fearing and righteous democracy, we must have an upright, sane, ethical and honest press. An honest press, sane, conservative editors, and patriotic, pure and high-minded journalists alone are able to preserve inviolate to succeeding generations, untarnished and undimmed, in all purity, majesty, and glory, our national honor, our sacred institutions, the beloved Republic itself!